



JOB FACTS INFORMATION

WEST SUBURBAN CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH CENTER

TELECOMMUNICATOR POSITION

Our Mission is

To provide, in a professional and fiscally responsible manner, a complete public safety answering and dispatching service for police, fire, and emergency medical services supporting the needs of the residents, businesses and visitors to the communities served by the West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center.

The attached pages contain a general description of the position of Telecommunicator and outline the duties, responsibilities, new hire training program, and working conditions of the position.

All applicants are encouraged to carefully read and familiarize themselves with the information on the attached pages.

General Statement of Essential Job Tasks:

Telecommunicators are under general supervision of the Shift Supervisor and Deputy Director. They perform work of moderate difficulty while receiving calls for police, fire, and emergency medical services via the emergency 9-1-1 system, radio, alarm circuitry and other telephone lines with all voice and data entry work continually recorded and constantly subject to live monitoring or later review and critique, including possible public disclosure of such work.

Examples of the Telecommunicator duties include; answering emergency and non-emergency calls for service, simultaneously entering this information into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, calm, negotiate, and advise callers who may be injured, confused, hysterical, or abusive and otherwise communicates to obtain needed and accurate information.

Telecommunicators determine the nature of the call, which also determines what type of response is required, as well as how many responders are needed to handle the incident, as well as providing medical pre-arrival instructions (EMD) in life threatening situations, continually updating responders with additional information as it is received, maintaining current status of all field units, both police, fire, public works, and civilian personnel from all communities serviced by WSCDC, frequently handling more than one call at a time, and at times communicating with other or multiple local, state, and federal agencies.

WSCDC Telecommunicators handle emergency communications during regional disasters for multiple agencies, must continually monitor numerous radio frequencies, have the responsibility to activate area-wide emergency alerting sirens in case of tornados, retrieve and disseminate information from the Secretary of State, criminal justice systems from the Illinois State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and various local systems.

WSCDC is a 24hr a day operation, which means that the center must maintain adequate staffing levels on a daily basis. Telecommunicators are required to work rotating shifts, mandatory overtime with minimal notice, weekends, and holidays, and perform other duties as assigned by the Supervisor or Director. At times Telecommunicators are required to testify in court concerning operations, procedures, or calls for service received by the center.

Training

Telecommunicators undergo a rigorous new-hire training program that is a minimum of 25 weeks in duration. Included are classroom lectures, assigned readings, work simulation and scenarios, and closely supervised on-the-job performance instruction. The training program requires frequent written, verbal, and performance based testing. Trainees must expect to receive regular reminders, correction of errors and mistakes, and are expected to learn from these errors and mistakes. Upon successful completion of the training program,

Telecommunicators remain on probation until their one-year anniversary of employment.

During training, trainees must learn and correctly use an extensive vocabulary of public safety related terminology. Trainees must be able to read and understand large volumes of written material (WSCDC rules, regulations, policies, procedures manual, etc.) to learn and be able to consistently apply a large number of complex policies and procedures.

While in training, trainees must develop eye-hand coordination sufficient to operate and view multiple computer monitors, their associated computer keyboards, and complex radio and telephone communications equipment in rapid succession and/or simultaneously. Systems in use include but are not limited to a computer assisted dispatch system, radio communications control console, and computerized telephone system with integrated mapping. These systems require memorization of and quick and accurate use of a large number of short command codes to obtain and input data accurately and rapidly on a consistent basis.

Comprehensive monitoring of on-the-job performance will be done both during and after the initial new-hire training period. Failure to consistently perform up to established performance standards during or after the training period; tardiness, absenteeism or other policy or rule violations will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Performing On the Job

Telecommunicators completing their tour of duty (shift) are responsible for briefing the on-coming relief personnel. During this time a large amount of information regarding criminal activity, criminal trends, procedural matters, and equipment status are discussed. Telecommunicators are expected to retain and use this information as needed, during the coming shift and over the next days, weeks, and even months.

Telecommunicators rotate duties during their work shift among several workstations, each with potentially different responsibilities and duties. Telecommunicator trainees must qualify through the initial new-hire training program to be able to successfully perform each different duty within the Communications Center. Failure to successfully train and qualify to work at all positions and handle different duties will result in termination from the training program.

Telecommunicators continuously weigh and evaluate large volumes of information. Telecommunicators must consider numerous factors in determining the appropriate responses to requests. Among these are: the nature of the

incident, the proper response agency, availability of resources, potential safety of the caller and response personnel, geographic location of incident, emotional and physical condition of caller, and criminal involvement and trends.

Telecommunicators must accurately and rapidly interpret disjointed information and make quick decisions regarding the urgency of a response, applicability for referral to other agencies, etc. One or more person's safety and/or life may be dependent upon these decisions. Telecommunicators are expected to make appropriate decisions based on training, experience, judgment, established procedures, and inferences. Telecommunicator's decisions are subject to constant review. Mistakes or errors in judgment and decision-making may result in constructive critique, correction, criticism and/or formal disciplinary action.

Telecommunicators must be able to quickly and accurately recognize letters, numbers, addresses, names, and license numbers received by radio, by telephone, or on a computer monitor. Data is often presented simultaneously or in rapid succession. Data must be accurately compared with information from previous calls (suspect descriptions, license numbers) to determine if it is new and/or updated, and if so, should be reported as such.

Telecommunicators must quickly and accurately obtain information from callers necessary to determining the appropriate response agency. Telecommunicators must control conversations and obtain needed information in an accurate, timely, and assertive manner. This may be complicated by callers who are often aggressive, distraught, confused, profane, impaired by mental defect, and sometimes nearly incomprehensible.

Telecommunicators must maintain high professional standards and attitudes when obscene language is directed at them, when handling emergency situations, and in handling large numbers of nuisance, hang up, or non-emergency calls.

Telecommunicators must have sufficient verbal and written communications skills to accurately and efficiently relay relevant information via radio or computer system. Written communications must be concise and to the point while providing accurate information (suspect description, incident type, caller name) on what the Telecommunicator determines may be important to the safety of the caller and/or responding personnel.

Any call may require the Telecommunicator to perform several activities simultaneously. Examples include contact with a 9-1-1 caller while calling the appropriate response agency, updating incident information while monitoring radio traffic, or speaking with a caller while determining response unit availability.

Telecommunicators often work at a very rapid pace over which they have little control due to workload and the nature of incidents. Telecommunicators are

often unlikely to be able to follow-up on and learn the final resolution of calls received earlier in their shift.

Working Conditions

Telecommunicators work within an organization structured on a "military" model. They must wear a uniform while on duty and are part of a formal chain of command. Telecommunicators have no choice on which days or shifts they must work. Telecommunicators may have their work schedules changed on short notice, regardless of personal considerations or childcare needs.

Telecommunicators must report for duty as ordered in emergency situations such as severe weather or disasters, regardless of personal considerations or childcare needs.

Telecommunicators must remain at their workstation except for breaks and lunch as the workload allows. Due to the unpredictable workload, regularly scheduled breaks are not guaranteed.

Telecommunicators work in an often noisy and distracting environment. Telecommunicators must be able to concentrate on their jobs for extended periods of time while other Telecommunicators are taking calls, people are walking around them and conversations are taking place in close proximity to them.

Scheduling

The West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center is staffed with Telecommunicators 24 hours a day.

WSCDC has three permanent shifts. Day shift works 0630-1430 (6:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.); afternoon shift works 1430-2230 (2:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.), and midnight's works 2230-0630 (10:30 p.m. – 6:30 a.m.). Full-time Telecommunicators work 40hrs per week with rotating days off. (Monday/Tuesday the first week; Tuesday/Wednesday the second week, etc.). Every fifth and sixth week Telecommunicators receive three consecutive days off; Friday/Saturday/Sunday, then Saturday/Sunday/Monday the following week. After the second weekend, the day off rotation starts over. (This process is facilitated by working six days straight, but only 40hrs between Sunday – Saturday, except during weekend days off).

Telecommunicators may be assigned to any one of these shifts and days off may be changed to meet the operational needs of the agency.

Upon successful completion of training, all Telecommunicators are assigned digital pagers. These pagers are the primary means of communications by which the center solicits volunteers for overtime shifts, occasionally makes short-notice overtime assignments, and notifies employees of emergency situations.

Telecommunicators must be prepared to remain in the center for an entire work shift.

Telecommunicators must schedule meals and breaks as their workload permits. WSCDC is housed in a non-smoking facility. Due to varying and unpredictable workload conditions, uninterrupted break times are not guaranteed.

Telecommunicators must report to work on their scheduled day and time. Since each position must be covered at all times, an employee who is tardy or absent causes another Telecommunicator to be assigned to work overtime to cover the vacancy. Tardiness or absenteeism is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Because the center must be staffed 24hrs a day, 365 days a year, Telecommunicators will be required to work a high percentage of nights, weekends, and/or holidays.

Transportation

Telecommunicators must have reliable transportation available, which will allow them to get to work for any assigned shift work including shifts scheduled on weekends and holidays, as well as periodic short-notice overtime assignments and during periods of inclement weather.

Essential Prerequisite Skills & Abilities

Candidates must be a high school graduate or equivalent.

Candidates must be able to pass a data entry test; successfully pass a written examination, criminal background check, drug, alcohol, hearing, personality screenings, and be able to obtain full access Law Enforcement Agency Data Systems (LEADS) and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) certifications.

Must be able to type accurately under conditions of multiple distractions; working skill in operating a computer keyboard. Must speak and write English clearly. Working ability to remember numerous details and quickly recall essential information; working ability to think clearly and act quickly in emergency situations; working ability to gather, organize, translate and process information from various sources; working ability to draw reasonable and logical conclusions

from information which is dissimilar; working ability to deal with people in highly stressful situations; working ability to record names and addresses rapidly and accurately; working ability to exercise effective interpersonal skills; working ability to hear and understand two messages transmitted simultaneously; working ability to read and discern visual images on a variety of media; working ability to function in a environment in the presence of multiple simultaneous sounds and visual sources; some ability to read and understand maps; working ability to work continuously wearing a communications headset that will cover one ear or fit within one ear and be able to still hear and understand other outside sound sources. Must have the ability to respect and maintain confidential information.

Trainees must be able to work all three shifts during training.

Candidates must have the ability to remain seated at the same workstation for extended periods of time.

Screening Process

Candidates meeting the minimum qualifications for the position will be required to complete a typing test. Candidates that successfully pass the data entry test will be immediately fingerprinted and undergo a personal and criminal background investigation.

During the criminal background investigation, candidates that have successfully passed the typing test will be invited to take a written assessment/battery of tests designed to determine the applicant's compatibility with the essential and prerequisite skills and abilities required for successful performance in the position of Telecommunicator.

Candidates receiving an acceptable score on the written assessment may be invited for an oral interview. (Usually the top 15-20 candidates).

Progressive advancement through each phase of the screening process is predicated upon successful completion of each previous phase. Candidates that do not show up for any scheduled testing or interview sessions during the selection process will be eliminated from further consideration for the position.

Candidates will be required to take and pass a physical examination including drug, alcohol screening, and a hearing test after a conditional offer of employment.